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SERVING THE TOTAL FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY

NOVEMBER 14, 1990

RESTAURANTS & INSTITUTIONS

31 Chains To Watch

R&I SHOWS YOU
WHERE THE GROWTH IS



Wonder Waffles
Sweeten Sales For
Pancake Cottage

CATERING
INNOVATIONS YOU
CAN IMITATE



*Fancy
Desserts*

Without Fuss

MORE INSIDE! SEE PAGE 4

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FOOD 130
Chicago's Trattoria
Convito gives new meaning
to the word sweetmeat with its
easy-to-prepare Chocolate Salami.

34 R&I'S HOT PROSPECTS: WHERE THE GROWTH IS

Today's growth chains sport thoroughly modern menus—grilled chicken, pasta, fresh baked goods—and manageable growth plans. *R&I* takes a look at 26 such organizations, from Restaurants Unlimited's Zoopa to Bassett's Original Turkey. Also profiled: Five established chains revving up for the '90s.

102 CROWD PLEASERS: CATERED AFFAIRS GET CREATIVE

Dinner for 600 or cocktails and hors d'oeuvres for 60? In this edition of Taste, caterers serve up ideas for creative food, service and presentation for really big parties—weddings, fundraisers and corporate affairs.

119 SPARKLING WATER'S PROFIT POTENTIAL IS CRYSTAL-CLEAR

Bottled sparkling water is now found atop tables across America—in cafes,

upscale restaurants and trendy bistros. Operators give marketing suggestions for the bubbling beverages.

130 SIMPLY SENSATIONAL SWEETS

Soufflés, meringues and fruit sauces can perk up a tired dessert menu—and are easily prepared without the expertise of a professional pastry chef. Our Food story offers tips on creating and merchandising dessert menus.

157 PICK A PECK OF PRODUCTS

R&I presents a veritable bounty of products. "For the Asking" features dessert recipes and merchandising information, available via the Reader Service Card at the back of the issue.

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Waffles—a menu mainstay at Pancake Cottage, the North Massapequa, N.Y.-based family-dining chain and one of this year's Hot Prospects.

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R&I REPORT

HELPING HAND

MORRISON COMMITTS TO EDUCATION



Demonstrating its commitment to providing corporate support for hospitality education, Morrison Inc. has established a \$100,000 Ruby Tuesday endowment in hospitality administration at Florida State University's College of Business in honor of the late James Bruce Wallace.

Wallace, a 14-year Morrison employee, died in April at the age of 32 after a long

**Ruby
Tuesday**
Established 1977

bout with Hodgkin's disease. He started as a dishwasher and worked his way up to regional employment manager.

The Ruby Tuesday/James Bruce Wallace Memorial Fund for Hospitality Administration will be matched with a \$50,000 challenge grant through a Florida state legislature program.

"We are a strong supporter of higher education, and we are committed to the goal of helping produce talented management prospects for our industry through hospitality programs such as the exceptional one found at Florida State," says Philip Hunt, senior vice president and general counsel at Morrison.

—Nancy Backas

WASTE WATCH

LITTER CONTROL: A HANDY CHECKLIST FROM THE FPI

Now that the environment is such a hot topic, just one piece of litter outside of a foodservice establishment can send an image of carelessness to the community. The Foodservice & Packaging Institute offers tips to help operators keep their property clean:

Immediate outside area:

- ☐ Are there enough receptacles to do the job? (This is determined by size of premises, traffic, volume.)
- ☐ Are receptacles placed where litter accumulates?
- ☐ Do receptacles have removable liners for easy maintenance?
- ☐ Is there a written maintenance schedule?
- ☐ Is the maintenance schedule based on usage? (Heavily used receptacles need emptying more frequently.)

Grounds maintenance:

- ☐ Are there frequent, regularly scheduled cleanups of the entire property?
- ☐ Are planted areas trimmed and raked regularly?
- ☐ Are planters frequently and carefully maintained to remove trapped litter and keep plants attractive?



Develop a written schedule for sweeping.

- ☐ Are outdoor tables screened against the wind?
- ☐ Are outdoor tables cleaned after each customer?
- ☐ Is the entire outdoor area well-lighted, with no dark corners in which to hide trash?

Sidewalks and streets:

- ☐ Is there a written schedule for frequent sidewalk sweeping and gutter cleaning?
- ☐ Are sweepings put into containers, and not pushed into gutters?
- ☐ If possible, are additional trash receptacles installed on the sidewalk beyond the property line in all directions?
- ☐ Are nearby commercial establishments encouraged to follow proper refuse-storage procedures?

For a complete checklist, write Foodservice & Packaging Institute, 1025 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Suite 513, Washington, D.C. 20036, or call (202) 822-6420.

—Rob Townsend

R&I DATA

COMMERCIAL SALES AND TRAFFIC COUNTS OFF SLIGHTLY

When surveyed in August, operators reported solid sales and traffic-count figures. But commercial averages were off from the June survey, when 60% reported better sales and traffic counts were up 3.8%.

SALES COMPARED TO YEAR AGO



TRAFFIC COUNTS COMPARED TO YEAR AGO

	Commercial	Institutional
Up more than 10%	28.3%	12.5%
Up 1% to 10%	18.3	30.0
No change	30.0	45.0
Down 1% to 10%	16.7	7.5
Down more than 10%	6.7	5.0
Average:	+ 3.3	+ 2.3

Source: Restaurants & Institutions Bureau of Foodservice Research.

R&I REPORT

FIRST PERSON

CARHOP QUEEN FROM SONIC BUDDING INDUSTRY SPOKESWOMAN

A lot of folks smile at the title Carhop of the Year, but Debbie Matthew of Glenpool, Okla., doesn't care. "When they hear all of the benefits, they stop laughing," she says. The 19-year-old sophomore at the University of Tulsa earned the honor over 8,000 other Sonic Drive-In employees and is paying her way through school with the winnings.

DEBBIE MATTHEW



I started working as a carhop for Sonic three years ago. My cousins worked there and I was always hearing stories about how fun they thought the job was. They were right. I really like the people I work with and the managers are really fair.

Typically, on school nights I work from 5 to 9. The first part of the shift I stock things up and clean. When the orders start coming in, that keeps you really busy.

I suppose the hardest thing about the job is you have to smile whether you want to or not. It doesn't really sound like that's a big deal—to go out smiling—but it's difficult. You have to put everything out of your mind

that's bothering you and just concentrate on being positive for the customer, because they know whether you're being sincere or not. This week it's been tough. I have three tests this week and a paper due.

Most of the time, customers are really nice. But I get about one or two cranky customers a week. Sometimes you can try to cheer them up, but other times they want to be in a bad mood. If that's the case, I try not to be excessively friendly. I just give them good service and step away.

Now that I'm in college, people are surprised that I'm still carhopping. Sometimes I ask friends in classes where they work and they'll say something like St. John's Hospital, which sounds really impressive. When they ask me the same question and I tell them I'm a carhop, they don't laugh, but I can tell they don't think it's a very prestigious job. That bothers me. I believe prestige is in the person, not the job. There are a lot of people I really respect in the restaurant industry and it seems a shame that they aren't honored more for who they are, instead of being looked down on because people are conditioned to think a job in a restaurant is a low-level thing.

I think if more restaurant companies did programs like the Carhop of the Year award, it would help change the industry's image. It provides the incentive for employees to give better service, and it really opens people's eyes when they find out all the benefits of winning the award.

TRAINING

TRAINING PLANS LINE UP FOR '91

Organizations are waking up to the growing importance of training line employees in customer service.

A survey at the Council of Hotel and Restaurant Trainers conference in August revealed that 66% of the trainers in attendance say their company plans to increase dollars and time allotted for line-employee service training for 1991, and only 2% will decrease training.

While shrinking budgets continue to thwart training efforts, 36% of respondents say the cost of teaching service skills to hourly workers averages less than \$100 per employee. Another 42% say costs run between \$101 and

SERVICE TRAINING TIME FOR LINE EMPLOYEES

4 hours or less	17%
5-8 hours	28
8-16 hours	30
17 hours or more	25

Source: CHART Survey on Total Quality Training

\$250. Fully 16% say training costs between \$251 and \$500, and 6% say costs run more than \$500.

The most preferred form of training is on-the-job (72%), followed by classroom (68%), self-paced workbooks (47%) and video (32%).

CHART, the industry's leading organization for human resources executives, is scheduled to meet again March 17-20, 1991, in Orlando, Fla. For information, contact Roz Mallet at (214) 351-4055. —J.W.

R&I DATA

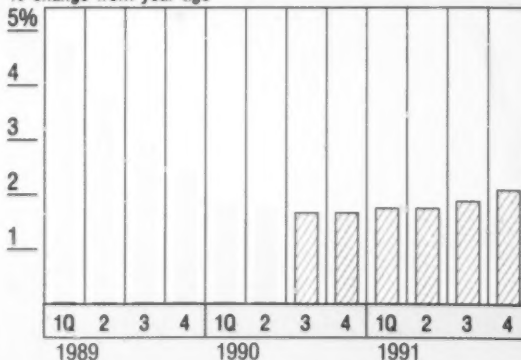
DISPOSABLE INCOME* ADJUSTED DOWNWARD

Events in the Middle East and talk of recession at home have affected consumer confidence and caused downward adjustments in disposable income forecasts.

☐ Actual

☒ Forecast

% change from year ago



*Real disposable income adjusted for inflation. Source: U.S. Department of Commerce. Cahnors Economics forecast starts 3rd quarter 1990.

LIQUID ASSETS

■ MERCHANDISING

Consumers Develop Thirst for Bottled Water

Still or sparkling beverages match well with rich and spicy foods.



A fixture in European restaurants for decades, bottled sparkling water is now found frequenting the tabletops of cafes, restaurants and bars across the United States.

In fact, the trend toward serving bottled water just mirrors the boom in bottled water on the home front. One out of every six American households consumed bottled-water products in 1988. In 1989, Americans drank more than 1.5 billion gallons of bottled water—close to 7 gallons per capita—says the International Bottled Water Association (IBWA), Alexandria, Va.

According to the association, sales of bottled water will continue to grow at a projected annual rate of 12%. But bottled water can be anything from distilled water sold in plastic jugs to the luxury brands of mineral water.

The biggest market for restaurateurs and bar operators lies in the demand for bottled mineral water and flavored water. The presence of calcium, magnesium and other natural minerals gives mineral water a crispness and assertive edge lacking in the taste of plain tap water. Still mineral water stands up to rich or spicy foods, while carbonated or sparkling varieties have a bubbly texture that many consumers enjoy with smooth-textured foods, such as pastas with cheese sauce.

Water is an obviously healthful choice for a beverage. Consumed in place of soft drinks or alcoholic beverages, bottled water is popular among calorie-conscious consumers. Most are willing to pay the price for the cachet of bottled water, too. A single-serving bottle (8 to 11 ounces) of sparkling water can sell for \$1.95 to \$3.50, depending on the venue. Since the wholesale price for a single-serving bottle ranges from 30 cents to 48 cents, the profit potential for operators is clear.

Due to drought conditions in the West and Southwest United States, some of the top markets for bottled water are in California, Arizona and Texas. The leading U.S. market for bottled water is California, with more

continued on page 122

Restaurant patrons find sparkling water a refreshing change of pace.

LIQUID ASSETS

Younger customers prefer the light taste of fruit-flavored or citrus-spiked sparkling water.

SPARKLING BEVERAGES

Fizz is in, whether it's in a sparkling water imported from France or a carbonated juice from Florida. Markets for sparkling beverages continue to grow at a brisk pace. Operators credit the success to these drinks' "healthful" and "natural" images.

Category	1989 sales	% change from 1988
Seltzer/ club soda	\$327 MM* 117 MM gal.	-4% -3%
Sparkling water	\$151 MM 38.1 MM gal.	3% 6%
Sparkling juice	\$115 MM 16.4 MM gal.	21% 25%

*Million. Source: SAMI/Burke. 52 weeks ending March 24, 1990.

BOTTLED WATER MARKET STATISTICS

□ Of the home, commercial, retail and vending markets for bottled water, the retail segment will see the most growth (10.3%) from 1988 to 1993. From 1993 to 1998, commercial sales growth is projected to lead the rest (8.4%).

□ Imported sparkling water accounted for \$213.7 million in 1988 (12% of total U.S. bottled water sales), but only for 49.7 million gallons (3% of total U.S. volume).

□ California left other states in its dust when it came to consuming bottled water in 1988. With its 565.4 million gallons swallowed, California beat New York (110.2 million gallons), Texas (105.1 million), Florida (92.2 million) and Illinois (59.9 million).

□ National per-capita consumption of bottled water increased from 5.0 gallons in 1986 to 6.4 gallons by 1988.

Source: Beverage Marketing, The U.S. Bottled Water Marketing and Packaging Report, 1989.



continued from page 119

than 565 million gallons of bottled water consumed there in 1988. In some Western cities, Los Angeles, for example, bottled water often replaces tap water since, in an effort to conserve water supplies, restaurateurs are not allowed to place glasses of water at table settings until water is requested by the customer.

Manfred Krankl, manager and co-owner of Campanile restaurant, Los Angeles, finds that customers prefer a bottled mineral water imported from Austria. Campanile, which has 140 seats, attracts a well-heeled crowd for its blend of Californian and Mediterranean cuisines. Thus, patrons do not blanch at paying \$6.00 for a liter of mineral water, or \$3.00 per single-serving bottle.

A more casual establishment, Babalu, Santa Monica, Calif., also does a brisk business in bottled water. Manager Al Stoncius chose a naturally sparkling mineral water from northern California to sell on the premises. Since the restaurant does not sell liquor, customers often choose the carbonated water to accompany the spicy Caribbean ethnic fare. "We sell only one flavored water, and that's a passion fruit-mango blend that fits in well with our tropical theme," Stoncius says.

Wetlands Preserve, billed as an "eco-bar" in the heart of Manhattan, attracts an environmentally aware clientele. "We sponsor lectures and presentations on ecology, recycling and other topics, in addition to the standard music and entertainment," says Russ Weiss, the bar's environment director. Wetlands offers a local mineral water, bottled in New York State, because the bottler picks up empty bottles and recycles them. An 8-ounce serving sells for \$2.25 and the bar orders 6 or 7 cases a week, "since most of our customers still drink beer when they go out at night," he says.

Flavored water, spiked with an essence of citrus or blended with fruit juices or fruit syrups, also is growing in popularity. Because the flavor is more pronounced, such carbonated drinks resemble soft drinks more than bottled water.

Yet the strong flavor sells well. Not as sweet as 100% fruit juice, flavored water is popular among younger (under 30 years old) customers. According to SAMI/Burke, a New York City market research firm, sales of sparkling juice beverages reached \$115 million, up 21% from 1988. Sales by gallon increased to 16.4 million gallons, up 25% from last year.

Whether just beginning to serve bottled water or adding a new flavored water or sparkling drink to your menu, consider the following tips:

Start with server training. To promote sales of bottled water, assemble a sampling of domestic and imported brands and ask servers to taste them. Keep their responses in mind when making your decision about which types of water to stock. That way, you will build an effective sales team for the bottled water you offer.

Be prepared to recommend bottled water and food matches. Sylvie Velisle, a manager at Celestino, a Beverly Hills, Calif., restaurant specializing in Northern Italian cuisine, points to the success she has had in pairing entrees with Italian bottled water. "Our servers always ask our customers if they want to try the native Italian water, and even at \$5.00 per bottle, almost every table orders it," Velisle says.

Don't restrict yourself to listing just one bottled water. Mike Leiaghat, owner of Chapo, a Belgian-French restaurant in the fashionable Melrose district of Los Angeles, has four brands of bottled water available. "Naturally, our customers are most intrigued by the Belgian water, since it blends best with our style of cooking, but we have requests for waters from other parts of the world, as well," Leiaghat says. "All of our clientele prefer the snappy taste of mineral water."

Let customers know that you offer bottled water. Add a tip-in card to your menu or a create a table tent—anything to alert diners to the new beverages. For mineral water, descriptions of the water's source and country of origin, and mention of the mineral content (if any) are informative and appealing.

—Lucy Saunders

ACTION EXPRESS

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